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S E R M O N

Preach'd at

SHEPTON-MALLET,

IN THE

County of **SOMERSET,**

On the Fifth of *November*, 1709.

Being the Day of the

Anniversary Thanksgiving

For our Deliverance from the

POWDER-TREASON.

By **JOSEPH STANDEN**,
Minister at **COLEFORD**, near *Froome* in
Somersetshire.

Tantum Religio potuit suadere Malorum !

L O N D O N :

Printed for *John Churchill*, at the *Black Swan*
in *Pater-Noster-Row.* 1710.

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in Pall-mall, 1709.

To the Worshipful

JOSEPH BROWN,

O F
Bowlas, Esquire,

A N D
HENRY STRODE,

O F
Ham, Esquire,

Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace
for the County of Somerset,

Gentlemen,

THIS Discourse of Right belongs
to You, who were Auditors when
it was deliver'd, and requested its
Publication, which perhaps may
not be thought sufficient to justify my send-
ing it into the World. A Sermon that may
be well enough receiv'd by a devout, and

candid, and judicious *Hearer*, yet will not always bear a critical and censorious *Reading*. Yet one Motive that was urg'd, the Probability of its doing some Good, (I confess) will always weigh with me more than a thousand Importunities. The Subject, I am sure, deserves to be consider'd: But they who have most need to consider it, are like to be most censorious, or not look into such Discourses at all.

There are several very excellent Discourses publish'd against Persecution, so that few can pretend to say any thing New: And the World is not so charitable as to make it altogether needless, to inculcate sometimes the good old Doctrine of *Peace* and *Love*.

I hope none will think I design particular Reflections in what I have said against Persecution: For I come not into the Pulpit to point out *Persons* and *Parties*. A Minister, who has an awful Sense of that dreadful Majesty, before whom we must all shortly appear, and whose Judgment is *Just*, will not very easily encourage himself in so trifling a Spirit, as to act the Part of a *Terra Filius*, when he is solemnly speaking from GOD to the People. A Discourse to recommend Love and Charity can never be unseasonable, nor uncharitable in any Age of the Church: 'Twas not so, even in the primitive Times. And if any think I make
Libano
particular

particular Reflections upon them, let them impute it to their own Guilt, which makes a more close Application than I intended: Tho' in the General, I must say, let the Guilty of all Parties apply it to themselves; for them 'tis design'd, and I am not ashamed to own it: But *Persecution* has such an odious Sound, that they who are guilty of it will not own it, but always defend it under another Name.

Indeed, according to the Opinion (or at least the Insinuations) of some, I ought neither to have publish'd, nor preach'd this Discourse: For we are told, That 'tis strange the Dissenters can have the Face to observe the Fifth of *November* as a Day of Thanksgiving, for GOD's delivering this Protestant Church from that dreadful Blow our Enemies design'd Us, when they are carrying on the same Designs the Papists aim'd at. Few will believe such a Representation of Us; and Men are not thoroughly instructed in the Arts of Slander, when they tell Stories as much exceeding the Bounds of *Faith* as *Charity*: For 'tis incredible, that a People, whose Doctrines and Interests are directly contrary to the Church of *Rome*, who so heartily oppos'd the Designs of our Enemies, and so zealously join'd with their Brethren of the Establish'd Communion in the glorious Revolution, that sav'd both
Church

Church and State, who cannot wish the Ruin of the *Church of England*, without wishing at the same Time their own Destruction: 'Tis strange that such a People should have the same Designs with the Papists: And 'tis as strange that *Her Majesty* should give Her Royal Word, *inviolably* to maintain a Toleration to such dangerous People, who (according to this Representation) must be, what some tell us they are, worse than the Papists themselves.

I am sure such uncharitable Surmises tend to promote the Designs of our Enemies, who are pleas'd to see us look shy upon one another, instead of uniting against them. The Dangers we have so narrowly escap'd, one would think, should make us stand together as firmly as we can, and by a Condescension on the one side, and a Compliance on the other, as far as may be, close up our unhappy Breaches. Whatever some violent Men may talk, yet I believe most People are of the Opinion of my Lord of *Sarum*, who tells us, that though || "*Upon the Restoration of the Royal Family, and the Church, the first Scene of Writing was naturally laid in the late Times, and with Relation to Conformity: Yet we quickly*

|| Lord Bishop of *Sarum*'s Pref. to his Expos. of 39 Art.

" *saw*

"*say that POPEERY was a restless*
 "*Thing, and was the STANDING*
 "*ENEMY of our Church.*"

Our being deliver'd from the Chains of the Roman Tyranny should put us on a nearer Union amongst our selves, and a Reformation of Manners.

A firm Union amongst our selves would make our Enemies for ever despair. But then this Union is not to be brought about by Fierceness and Disdain, by Provocations and Injuries, by Reproaches and *Misrepresentations*, by Force and Violence, by Malice and Revenge on either side. It were to be wish'd we had one Heart and one Way. But however, till we can walk in *one Way*, nothing should hinder our having *one Heart*.

Gentlemen, I need not tell You, that a Reformation of Manners is one of the great Things we want to have yet more vigorously and universally attempted; without which our Reformation in Doctrine and Worship will but expose us to the Derision of our Enemies, and to the Reproaches which a just and terrible GOD will make Us when we appear before Him. The Dissolution of Manners is too universal and open. Drunkenness and Debauchery are so common, that in some Places a sober Man is almost pointed at. And even the Poor,

who

who so much abus'd and despis'd their late Fulness and Plenty in worfe than brutal Excesses, (many of them) do not seem much restrain'd by the Scarcity GOD is pleas'd to visit us with. *The People turneth not to Him that smiteth them.* Houses of Drunkenness and Excess are in many Places as much visited as ever; and those Nests of Debauchery are multiplied to a strange Degree. In that Country Retirement where I live, there are in one Parish twenty Houses (or more) that sell Liquors. And the Presence of advancing the publick Revenue is no Excuse for these Disorders: For Her **MAJESTY** desires not to support any Part of Her Dignity by the Sins of Her People, which by Her Royal Proclamation, and the Laws of the Land, are severely forbidden. And whatever Revenue it may at present bring in, yet the extravagant Number of Tipling-Houses, and the unrestrain'd License of frequenting them, increases the Number of the Poor, who must be maintain'd by the publick Charity; which in many Places must sink the Value of Lands, and so render the sober Part of the Nation less able to support the Honour of the Government. And it would be more Charity, both to the Souls and Bodies of the poor People, to restrain them effectually from those Excesses at first. In a Village near
me,

me, I am inform'd, it hath been computed, that about a Thousand or fifteen Hundred Pounds a Year have been spent in those Drinking-Houses, and most of this by the meaner Sort of People.

A Sense of the pernicious Consequences of these Debaucheries hath, (I doubt not) *Gentlemen*, engaged You to put the Laws in Execution against profane Swearing, and Drunkenness, &c. in the Town where this Discourse was deliver'd: Nor can they, whom *Justice* and *Charity* obliges You to punish for their Immoralities, reflect on your Zeal and Resolution, since You abhor the Vices You correct, and have the Advantage and Authority of *Example* as well as *Law* on your Side.

You have no Reason therefore to be discouraged by any Reproaches, since the very Societies for Reformation of Manners (tho' encouraged by *Coronets* and *Mitres*) are banter'd and lampoon'd by those who neither fear GOD nor regard Man. They that walk after their own Lusts, will be Scoffers and Haters of those who would oppose them in their Wickedness, and restrain them from corrupting others. Hence *Magistrates* and *Ministers* have been represented in ridiculous or odious Colours on the *English Stage*, a Rudeness both to the Church and State, very inconsistent with all the Rules of Politeness

and Good Manners, which the Authors of the *Drama* pretend to teach the World; and hence the very Expressions of the Sacred Writings have in those vile Scenes been profaned to furnish out their *double Entendres*; and been turned not only into Burlesque, but Obscenity. Such insolent Assaults upon the False Gods on the *Pagan* Theatres would have drawn a capital Punishment from the Magistrate on the Authors and Actors, if it had not been prevented by their being torn in pieces by the common People. I grant to these Men, (which is all they can say) that some Magistrates and Ministers have not well supported the Dignity of their Character; but what then? Because there was a *Judas* in our Blessed *Saviour's* Family, must the very Character of an Apostle, and the Majesty of GOD, and the Honour of our adorable REDEEMER, be buffoon'd by incarnate Devils? No Wonder a Minister of *Jesus Christ* is a meer Jest with these Men; for the *Servant is not greater than his LORD*. Too many Great Men have seem'd to regard a Clergy-man or a Chaplain, no otherwise than as an Appurtenance to their Pomp and Equipage, or as an Engine to carry on some State-Intrigue, or Party-Design; to flatter and extol their Friends, (if not their Vices) and declaim against all who differ from them; which, in short, is no better Treatment

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Treatment than People give their *Domestick* Animals, whom they careſs for no other Reason, than becauſe they are *fawning* to all *within* Doors, and *fierce* againſt all *without*.

And this is one Cauſe, (amongſt too many others) that *Deiſm* (a Name too ſoft for the Thing it often ſignifies) has had ſuch a prodigious Increate among Men of Rank and Figure in theſe Kingdoms. Men are debauch'd in their Lives, and are willing to have Principles to ſupport their Practices. 'Tis Time for Us to forget our little Differences, ſince the Controverſie is not now about *Biſhops* and *Presbyters*, but whether CHRIST Himſelf be the Great *Biſhop* of Souls: Not whether this or that Interpretation of Scripture be true, but whether the Scripture it ſelf be the Word of GOD, or the Invention of Men, and whether all *Revealed* Religion be not *Priest-Craft* and *Impoſture*: And (may I not ſay) not whether one or the other Party worſhips GOD aright, but whether there be *any* GOD at all to be worſhipped?

Is this our Thankfulneſs to GOD for our Deliverance from Popery? *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh People and unwiſe? Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord: And ſhall not my Soul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* And may not theſe daring Wretches be one Day convinc'd, that

'twas only the Mercy of that GOD whom they now deny, and the Prayers of his Servants whom they now abuse, that kept them from being swallow'd quick to that *Hell*, which at present they make a *Fest* of?

Any *Protestant Church* must be in *Danger* by these Things: For such wicked Principles and Practices are a ready Way to open the Gates to Popery. When Men have cast off *All* Religion, they are ready to profess *Any*, as their Interest may lead them; especially that which indulges them in their Vices, and in which they can buy off the Torments of another World, (if they cannot avoid sometimes fearing there is one) will not be unacceptable to them.

I hope, *Gentlemen*, I need make no Apology for this long Dedication, which is sufficiently made by the Importance of the Subject, on which much more might very easily be said. But our Unhappiness is, that so *much* hath been *said*, and so *little* *done* to reform Us; for the Commands of Her Majesty, and the Endeavours of several Great and Good Men, in too many Places, are but faintly seconded, to say no worse.

Gentlemen, may You long live to do GOD and the Government Service, by your Loyal and Pious Endeavours for Reformation, in that Place of Authority You are entrusted with. May You continue to be Patrons and
Examples

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Examples of Piety and Justice, Charity and Moderation; may You be applauded and assisted by Good Men in this World, and rewarded by GOD in a Better, the only Place where Nothing will need to be reform'd; which is the earnest Prayer of,

GENTLEMEN,

Your sincere and oblig'd Friend,

And most humble Servant,

Joseph Standen.

Examples of Piety and Justice, Charity and
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formed, which is the earnest prayer of

GENTLEMEN

Your sincere and obliged Friend,

And your humble Servant,

Joseph Standon

SERMON

Preach'd on the
Fifth of November, 1709. &c.

St. JOHN xvi. 2.

*They shall put you out of the Synagogues:
Yea, the Time cometh, that whosoever
killeth you, will think that he doeth
G O D Service.*

ONE of the Designs of false Religions, one of the Means whereby they have been propagated and maintain'd, and one of the Marks of Imposture, is the flattering and encouraging the Vices and Corruptions of Mankind, particularly their *Ambition* and their *Sensuality*. The Maxims of the Holy Jesus, the Blessed Author of our Re-

Religion, are directly contrary to these. He came not into this World himself to enjoy the Pomp and Pleasure of Humane Greatness: Nor did He make any Profelytes, by promising them the Luxury and Licentiousness, the Dominion and Glory, which Men are so apt to think a Heaven upon Earth. He took quite contrary Measures, and plainly told his Hearers, That he that would be his Disciple, must be a Disciple of the Cross; That he must not only deny himself, and mortify his most darling Vices, *cut off his right Hand, and pluck out his right Eye*, and subdue his own Corruptions within him; but must also expect the Rage and Malice of Men from without. His Disciples were told, That in this World they must expect Tribulation, and be *hated of all Men*, for the Sake of their crucified Lord. And this Rage and diabolical Fury our Saviour foretold, would be cover'd with a Pretence of Religion, and Conscience: *They shall put you out of the Synagogues: Yea, the Time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth GOD service.*

When Men are once thoroughly rooted in Malice and Prejudice, or give up themselves entirely to the Conduct of those who are inspir'd with a blind and mad Zeal, they may in a little Time look upon that
Religion

Religion which is most Divine and Excellent, as Dangerous and Abominable; and those Persons of whom the World is not worthy, they may think unworthy to live any longer in it. This was the Case of the *Jews*: They were resolv'd not to acknowledge a Saviour, whose Kingdom was *not of this World*, who was not like to deliver them from the Yoke of the *Roman* Government, much less to make them Lords of the World; and therefore this Prejudice stuck so fast upon them, that the Doctrine of a crucified *Messias* became intolerable; and the more so, when they found that the Ceremonies of the *Mosaic* Religion were to be nailed to his Cross, and expire with Him. Both these Things fired them with an implacable Madness, so that they stuck at no Methods to stop the Progress of Christianity, any more than others since, have to stop the Progress of its Reformation: *They shall put you out of the Synagogues; Yea, the Time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth GOD service.*

From which Words I shall take Occasion to consider the following Particulars.

I. That our being condemned by Men for our Religion, is no Proof that we are in the Wrong.

II. That that Doctrine which makes it lawful to destroy People, because they are not of our Religion, is a Doctrine condemned by *Christ*, and contrary to the Spirit of Christianity.

III. I shall consider whether there be not a sort of People in the World, that do not only *profess*, but have often *practis'd* this Doctrine.

IV. How great a Blessing it is, to be deliver'd from the Power of such Men. And,

V. How we should shew our Thankfulness for such a Deliverance.

I. That our being condemn'd by Men for our Religion, is no Proof that we are in the Wrong: Which appears from the Example in the Text, and from Reason and Experience in other Cases. This is plain,

(1.) From the Example in the Text. *They shall put you out of the Synagogues.* This was a very great Punishment among the *Jews*. We find it look'd upon as very dreadful; *St. John ix. 22.* The Parents of the Man that was born blind, and had his Sight miraculously given him by our blessed Lord, feared the *Jews*, for they had agreed already, that if any Man did confess that he was *Christ*, he should be put out of the Synagogue. So the Evangelist tells us, *St. John xii. 42.* Among the Rulers many believed

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lieved on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue. They were afraid of being disown'd by those who had usurp'd a great Reputation for Knowledge, Wisdom, and Holiness: But yet this was no Proof, That they were in the Wrong, whom they thus disown'd. Our Saviour speaks in the Text, of those who were his own Apostles and Disciples, Men who had an infallible way to know Truth, who were extraordinarily taught by the *Holy Ghost*, and therefore could not err; Men whose Writings we justly own and reverence, as Divinely inspir'd, and as a Rule of Faith and Life to the End of the World. They could neither be deceived themselves, nor could they deceive others; for they urg'd the most forcible Reasons and Arguments, and wrought the most undoubted and convincing Miracles for the Proof of their Doctrine. We can desire no greater Proofs for the Truth of any Doctrines, than such as these: That they be not contrary to the Law and Light of Nature; that they be consistent with the Honour, and Majesty, and Holiness of GOD; that they tend to promote the Good and Happiness of Mankind; that they be not Doctrines calculated to promote the temporal Interest, Dominion and Power of those who went about to spread this Religion;

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gion; that they be not Doctrines contriv'd to favour Licentiousness, and indulge the Lusts and Wickedness of Men; that they be Doctrines which promote Peace and Love; that they be not contradictory to the Revelations GOD hath formerly made; that they be confirm'd by fresh Miracles, and by great Numbers of them; and that Matters of Fact be not deny'd by Enemies themselves. Now all these Things (besides several others) unite together, to convince the World of the Truth of the Christian Religion: And yet the blind, the obstinate *Jews* cast those out of the Synagogue, who preach'd this Heavenly Doctrine, and confirm'd it by Miracles. They laid a severe Command upon them, not to preach any more in the Name of Jesus. *Acts v. 40.* Now all this was done by the *Rulers* of the Synagogues, and by the great, wise, and learned Men, who had perhaps the haughty Vanity, to think they were the only Persons who had the *Mind of GOD* with them, and that it was next Door to Blasphemy against GOD, to call any Thing in question which they had declar'd to be Truth; that they had the Faculty of making certain and infallible Interpretations of every Part of the Law of GOD; and that whoever dissented from them did err from the Truth, and were not *sound in the Faith*. This was the Tempest and

and the Thunder, the Noise and the Cant of those Times: And yet we do all own, that, how confident soever these *ruling Men* were of being in the Right, they were every Soul of them in the Wrong, in condemning Christianity.

(2.) 'Tis very plain from Reason, and Experience in other Cases.

'Tis plain from Reason; for they who are most ignorant, and most erroneous, are usually the forwardest to condemn others. The wise Man tells us, *Prov. xxvi. 16.* that a *Fool may be wiser in his own Conceit, than seven Men that can render a Reason.*

It is also very evident, that Christ hath given to every particular Person, a Liberty of considering seriously, and examining for himself. Nay, *Christ* hath not only allow'd us this Liberty, but he hath commanded us to make use of it, *Search the Scriptures, &c.* Nor is it a contemptible Reason, to consider, that they who have made use of this Liberty, with the greatest Application, have been commended by inspir'd Writers themselves. They who were not of such a slavish Spirit, or so careless, or so lazy, that out of a blind Reverence for others, they put out their own Eyes: They who were not so haughty and self-conceited, that they scorn'd to stoop to Consideration; but us'd the Liberty GOD had given them to judge for

for themselves, and see with their own Eyes : These were *more Noble than* others, who either received, or rejected Truth without due Consideration; *Acts xvii. 11.* Add to this, that our *Lord Jesus Christ* hath expressly forbidden Christians to *lord* it over one another's Faith, and charg'd his Disciples to call no Man *Master upon Earth* ; that is, Not to set up any Man, or Number of Men, and blindly submit to them, without any good Reason and Argument, and think our selves bound to maintain all their Positions.

The last Reason I shall offer is this, Because no Man, or Number of Men can produce any good Evidence, that they ought to be own'd as Lords of the Faith of others, and that every Thing is Truth which they are pleas'd to declare such. They, who would have every Body submit to their Decisions, ought to oblige Mankind to it, one of these *three* Ways ; Either they must prove by *Scripture*, that Christ has commanded us to submit to them ; or else they must prove their Doctrines by *Miracles* ; or else they must make their Opinions plain to the Understandings of Men. As to the *first*, None can pretend any such Commission from *Christ* with any good Reason, since (as has been hinted already) *Christ* has given Orders directly opposite to any such Pretences.

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We justly think the *Roman Church's* assuming this Authority, as an Invasion of the Prerogative of GOD, and the Scriptures urg'd to support so great a Pretence, are manifestly and miserably wrested. And as to the *Second*, the proving their Doctrine by Miracles; If they could do this, they would have something to say; tho', if we suppose such a Case, we cannot possibly think that GOD would work Miracles to establish any Doctrines contrary to the Light of Nature, or contrary to those Doctrines which have been already confirm'd by the Miracles of *Christ* and his Apostles. We may safely conclude, That these Miracles (if they will call them so) are false and lying Wonders: For we are sure GOD would never work Miracles to prove the Truth of that which He hath already declar'd to be false, or to prove that to be false, which he hath already declar'd to be true: For this would destroy the Evidence of all Miracles, and at this Rate none of them would prove any Thing at all. This therefore they cannot pretend to. They have temporal Power, and the Arguments of Sword, Fire, and Faggot: But they have not the Testimony of Miracles; and therefore it was a very smart and wise Answer, which we are told was given to one of the Popes, when he shew'd his vast Treasures

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to one of his Friends, and told him he could not say as *St. Peter* did, *Silver and Gold have I none*: Neither (reply'd the other) can you say as he did, *Arise and walk*. And as to the *Third Thing*, If they pretend to make their Doctrines plain, by Reason and Arguments: This is what all *Protestants* contend for, if they are true to their own Principles, that we ought not to be convinced any other way, than by Scripture, and good Reason. I join these two together, hoping that none will so reflect on the Divine Oracles, or give Infidels so much Advantage, as to represent the one as, contrary to the other.

And, besides these Reasons, Experience in other Cases tells us the Truth of what I have said, That being *condemn'd by others for our Religion, is no Proof that we are in the Wrong*. If we look into the Histories of many Councils, that have been assembled in several Ages, we shall find but too plain Proof, how great Uncertainty a Lover of Truth would be at, who depends on their Determination what to believe: For one Council hath decreed one Thing, another the quite contrary. One Council hath decreed the Lawfulness of Worshipping Images, another hath condemn'd it: And perhaps the very same Men, in another Council, have condemn'd their own Opinions: So that

that we may see how wild and groundless that Pretence is, that because the Holy Ghost did infallibly guide the Council of the Apostles and Disciples assembled at *Jerusalem*, *Acts* xv. 28. therefore the Holy Ghost does in the same Manner guide and influence other Councils in after Ages: For since those Councils have decreed contrary to one another, 'tis plain (however their Pretences and Confidence might be equal) that they were not all guided by the Holy Ghost; and by Consequence, that there must be some other Rule whereby to judge and distinguish between the right and the erroneous Determinations, which Rule can be no other than the Holy Scripture. Nor can there be a clearer Proof, that those Councils were not guided by the unerring Spirit of GOD, than to consider that several of them were *manifestly* influenced by the Intrigues of Princes, and the Policy of humane Designs: And Matters were frequently carried on with a great deal of Rage and Animosity, Bitterness and Persecution, both in their Debates amongst themselves, and towards others: So that there was but too much Occasion given for the Reflection of a certain Author, that it would seem "*Strange, if Divinity should choose to dwell where Humanity was seldom to be found.*" And indeed what else can be

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expected

expected but such Contradictions as these, when poor frail fallible Men shall take upon them to usurp the Throne of *Christ*, and dictate to all the rest of Mankind? No wonder when Men build their *Babel* against Heaven, that there is a Contradiction and Confusion of Languages amongst them. If once we allow and approve an absolute determining Power in any Party of Men, we deliver up our selves bound and blind into the Hands of our Lords and Masters, who may carry us whithersoever they please. A Deliverance from such a Power, we come to thank GOD for this Day: For if such a Power should prevail, how fatal would it be? Where would it stop? 'Twas this very Thing was the Foundation of Popery, and the very Original and Cause of all those barbarous Persecutions which that Generation of Men have been guilty of; for when once *Synods* and *Councils*, or *Popes*, or all of them together (for alas! 'tis no great Matter who puts on the Chains, if we must be Slaves; when once they) came to have an imposing Power, Things were carried on by Degrees to that Height of Spiritual Tyranny, 'till at last it came to this, that they who had too much Conscience and Consideration to submit to the Doctrines and Commands of those who call'd themselves the *Church*, that is, of the *Popes* and the

the *Priests*, must have their Bodies deliver'd over to the Flames, and their Souls to the Devil: *They shall put you out of the Synagogues: Yea, the Time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think he doeth GOD service.* Which leads me to consider,

II. That that Doctrine which makes it lawful to destroy People, because they are not of our Religion, is a Doctrine condemned by Christ, and contrary to the Spirit of Christianity. This is evident from the Words of our Saviour in the Text, *The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think he doeth GOD service.* Which is a Prophecy concerning the great Wickedness of the Enemies of Christianity. They shall rise to that Height of Malice, that under Pretence of promoting the Honour and Glory of GOD, and rooting out of the World false and dangerous Doctrines, they shall murder and destroy the true Followers of Jesus Christ.

But, setting aside this Consideration, supposing these Men had been in an Error; yet we shall see that 'tis a most detestable Doctrine, and contrary to all Reason and Humanity, to declare it lawful to endeavour to suppress those Errors by Violence and Blood. This Matter will appear sufficiently plain, if we consider these four or five Things.

(1.) This Method can never answer the End, for which it is pretended to be made Use of, and that is to convert Men to the true Religion: For Force and Violence can never have the least Effect to enlighten the Understanding, and convince the Judgment, and perswade Men of the Truth of any Religion. It not only cannot answer any good End, but it may have (and perhaps always has had) a very bad Effect. It may make Men Hypocrites. A Man may perhaps be brought, by the Fear of Torments, and the Terrors of Death, to profess his Belief of that [which is against his own Persuasion: But no Man can ever be satisfied that any Thing is true, by being threaten'd, and abus'd, and persecuted, because he questions the Truth of it. I need use but one Argument to confirm what I say upon this Head, which is, That however some of all Parties may be willing (for ill Ends) to have this *good* Method made use of towards others; yet there is no Man in the World, who would be willing to have the Experiment tried upon himself, or could be perswaded that his being persecuted, imprisoned, and murdered, is the way for him to discern Truth, or find out which is the right Religion.

(2.) If

(2.) If it were true which Persecutors pretend, that they whom they put to Death were guilty of damnable Errors, yet this makes the Persecutors guilty of an Error, as certainly (I think) damnable as any whatsoever, and that is the most inhuman and devilish Cruelty: For if those whom they put to Death, are guilty of damnable Errors; then, by taking away their Lives in that State and Condition, they send them directly to Hell. Can any one therefore believe that Persecutors are in earnest, when they pretend 'tis out of Love to Men's Souls, that they kill their Bodies, since by their own Confession they send the Souls of those whom they kill, as a Sacrifice to the Devil? Whereas, if they had suffer'd them to live, they knew not but they might have been converted, and brought over to the Truth.

But if it be said, they are put to Death, lest they should spread their infectious Doctrines, and corrupt others. To this the Answer is very easy: For has not this the quite contrary Effect? Others, when they see that Fire and Sword are the chief Arguments made use of by their Adversaries, may be apt to conclude, that they have no great Reason on their side, when they are oblig'd to betake themselves to Force and Cruelty, if they will maintain their Doctrines, and bring over Profelytes to them:

But

But if this would stop the Progress of Errors, yet it is in such a way as would tend as much to stop the Progress of Truth too. And is it not pity that Religion, which came down from Heaven, should be thought to need the Rage and Fury of Hell to support it ?

(3.) This is a Doctrine which tends very much to the Disgrace of the Christian Religion, and to hinder its being received by Heathens and Infidels. If a Christian should go and preach to an Heathen Prince, and perswade him to embrace the Christian Faith, and with all Humility and Modesty should plainly tell him, That the Christian Priests, or the *Universal* Bishop the Pope, had Power to depose Kings, and take away not only their Crowns, but their Lives, if they were not of the true Religion : Or if they should, in order to make Converts, frankly tell the People, That unless they receiv'd those Doctrines and Opinions which were (or hereafter might be) recommended to them by *Synods* and *Councils*, they must expect to be imprison'd, banish'd, or burnt : Instead of making Profelytes to Christianity, this would be the most effectual Course to expose it to universal Abhorrence. If the primitive Christians had preach'd this Doctrine, they would have converted but very few to their Religion : And surely, if they had any such Doctrine amongst them, they

they would have publish'd it ; for the Christian Religion knows no Doctrines that 'tis ashamed of, or affects to hide in Darkeness, and conceal from the Eyes of the World, which is one of the Characters of Imposture and Delusion. This therefore is a Doctrine to be abhor'd by all Christians, since it tends so justly to exasperate the Heathens and Infidels against the Religion of Christ, and all that profess it. Should these Heathens say, If you teach that Men who profess a false Religion, ought to be put to Death, by this means you stir up our Neighbours (who are proselyted to your Opinion) to fall upon us: And by your own Argument, we who believe the Christian Religion to be false, are bound to put you to Death, and to practise your own Doctrine upon your selves: What Answer could be made to such an Argument as this?

(4.) As this is the Way to tempt those who are persecuted to Hypocrisie, so there is a great Deal of Hypocrisie in the Persecutors themselves: For they, who take such cruel and violent Methods to suppress dangerous Errors and false Opinions, are not sincere in their Pretences; if they were, they must then use the same Methods upon those who profess to be of their own Opinion, if they are prophane and debauch'd in their Lives. Drunkenness, Covetousness, Oppression,

pression, Malice, Revenge, Pride, Impurity, prophane Swearing and Cursing, and such like Vices, are as dangerous and fatal to the Souls of Men, as any Errors in Judgment whatsoever; for these wicked Wretches not only ruin their own Souls, but they also spread the Infection amongst Multitudes of others, and make Wickedness publick and general. But we do not find that these zealous Patrons of the true Religion do kill and burn those of their own Communion, who are guilty of these detestable Vices. Instead of this, we find they are extoll'd and caress'd for their Zeal, if they do but heartily curse and hate those of a different Opinion. Nothing can bribe off the fiery Sentence that is pronounc'd against an *Heretick*: But those of their own Church, who are Monsters of Wickedness, and live and die in the most scandalous Enormities, are very favourably us'd. A little Money can secure them, not only from Censures and Punishments in this Life, but deliver them from the Fire of Purgatory, and the Miseries of another World. This is such vile and staring Hypocrisie, that the very Naming it is sufficient to expose and confute it.

(5.) *Jesus Christ* himself never us'd any such Methods to propagate his Doctrine: Nor has He left any Orders to his Disciples to do it. And our blessed Lord did not
want

want Means and Power, if He had thought fit to have us'd this Method. His own Conduct had nothing at all in it of this Nature. He treated not only those who were *not* his Disciples, but even his most bitter Enemies with a great deal of Tenderness and Humanity, endeavouring to convince them by Reason, to soften them by Gentleness, to edify them by a good Example, and to prove his Doctrine by the Evidence of Miracles. But when they refus'd to hearken to Him, (though He gave infinitely more Proof for what He asserted than any of the Patrons of Persecution can do for their Doctrine, yet) *he endur'd the Contradiction of Sinners against himself.* It had been very easy for our blessed Saviour to have destroy'd those who refus'd to embrace the holy Doctrine He publish'd; for though He had no Guards nor Armies of Men, yet He had Legions of Angels at his Command. St. Matth. xxvi. 53. But his *Kingdom was not of this World, and the Son of Man came not to destroy Men's Lives, but to save them.* St. Luke ix. 56. And so far was our Saviour from Recommending such bloody Maxims to his Disciples, that when they were upon a particular Occasion transported with an uncharitable Zeal, (tho' out of an Indignation at a very great Affront offer'd to Christ in Person) and would have had Fire from Heaven

to consume those who rejected their great Master; instead of thanking them for their Zeal, He turn'd and rebuk'd them, and plainly told them, they *knew not what manner of Spirit they were of*: Though there may be something said to excuse them, for they first desir'd to know whether it was our Saviour's Pleasure, before they would positively call for Fire from Heaven; *Lord, wilt thou that we command Fire to come down from Heaven, and consume them?* But those Men are without all Excuse, who after Christ hath so plainly declar'd against such a Spirit, yet resolve to indulge it in themselves, and encourage it in others; resolving, since they cannot command Fire from Heaven, to fetch it from Hell, rather than want it to burn those of a different Perswasion. But the Apostles were Followers of the Example of their Great Lord, as both their Doctrine and their Practice recorded in the New Testament do abundantly testify. And so far were they from leaving any such inhuman Principles to the Pastors of the Church, that on the contrary they are commanded to *be gentle unto all Men*, 2 Tim. ii. 24. Not only a burning, but even a *bratling* Zeal is declar'd to be unbecoming the Disciples of the meek and compassionate Jesus. When Men are guilty only of the latter, it is no Proof that they abhor the former; for
very

very often they *bratol*, only because they cannot *burn*.

III. Let us now consider, whether there are not a sort of People in the World who have not only *profess'd*, but often *practis'd* this Doctrine. There are such a sort of People, and those not *Jews*, *Turks*, nor *Pagans*, who profess to hate the Christian Name; but such as not only call themselves Christians, but pretend to be the only true Christians. Little did the Primitive Christians think that the very same Spirit which rag'd in the *Jews* and *Heathens* against *Christians*, should one Day rage in *Christians* one against another. But the *Roman Catholics* advance such Principles as these, That no *Faith* is to be kept with *Hereticks*; that 'tis lawful to kill and murder for propagating the true Faith and Religion. And that which strikes home upon them in this Matter is, that this is not the Opinion of their private Doctors, (which in some Cases they may pretend, to excuse themselves) but 'tis the Doctrine of their great Councils, and of their Popes; as is manifest from the Decrees of the *Lateran Council*, in the Beginning of the Thirteenth Century, wherein sate the Pope, the Patriarchs of *Constantinople* and *Jerusalem*, seventy Arch-Bishops, four hundred and twelve

Bishops, eight hundred Abbots and Priors, and Ambassadors from most of the Princes in *Christendom*. The Council of *Lyons* about thirty Years afterwards confirm'd the same Doctrine. Now this is not a Doctrine which is a speculative Opinion only; (as some Doctrines there may be, dangerous enough in themselves, but then Men do not live and practise according to them, and so the bad Effect of them is prevented) but this Doctrine has been put in Practice with a great deal of Fierceness and Cruelty for several Ages. They have written this barbarous and unchristian Article of their Creed in flaming and bloody Characters all over *France, Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, Savoy, the Palatinate, Ireland, and Britain, &c.* When the News of the horrid Massacre at *Paris* was brought to *Rome*, the Pope receiv'd it with a great deal of Triumph and Satisfaction, and † glory'd in that which

† There are at *Rome*, in the Palace of the *Vatican*, in the great Hall where the Pope gives Audience to Ambassadors, several Pieces of Painting, representing the *Parisian* Massacre, and one wherein the News of Admiral *Coligni's* Death is brought to the *French King*, with these Words, *Rex Colignii necem probat*. The Pope order'd triumphant Medals to be struck, having on one side the Pope's Head, with this Inscription, *Gregorius XIII. Pont. Max.* An. 1. on the other side a destroying Angel, with a Cross held up in one Hand, and a Sword in the other, killing the Protestants, with these Words, *Ugonottorum Strages*. 1572. *Misson, Voyage d'Italie*, 2. Edit. Tom. 2. pag. 32. *imprim. a la Haye*, 1694.

many

many of the Heathen Persecutors would have been asham'd of : For here was not only Cruelty, but the basest Treachery in the World. And the Occasion of this Day's *Anniversary Thanksgiving*, is a sufficient Proof of its being more than a speculative Opinion, for they endeavour to put it in Practice whenever and wherever they have Opportunity. That their devilish Design was not accomplish'd, was owing to a wife and wonderful Disappointment of Providence. The Remembrance of all these bloody Tragedies which they have acted, will render it needless to say much on the

IVth Head, How great a Blessing 'tis to be deliver'd from the Power of such Men. For if we have any Regard for all that is dear and valuable to us, if we have any Love for our Lives or Liberties, our Peace or Property, our Friends and Relations, our Children and Posterity : If we have any Reverence for our Bibles, the Holy Oracles of Heaven, so often seal'd with the Blood of the Martyrs, any Regard to the Principles of Humanity, or the Liberties of Mankind, the Christian Religion, and our Immortal Souls : In a Word, if we have any Love for GOD or Man, any Concern for our selves, or Compassion for others, we need no other Arguments to convince us, how great

great a Happiness it is to be deliver'd from the Effects of such Villainous Principles, and from the Mercy of those Men whose tender Mercies are Cruelties, and who solemnly in the *Name of GOD*, act the Part of the *Devil*, the great Enemy and Destroyer of Mankind.

V. How then should we manifest our Thankfulness for so great a Blessing as this is? I shall hint a few Things on this Head, and so conclude. We should manifest our Thankfulness,

(1.) By our serious practising that Religion, which GOD gives us Liberty to profess. Without this all our Deliverances and Privileges will prove infinitely to our Disadvantage in the End. Let us not delude our own Souls, and fancy that we are safe because we are *Protestants*, and abhor the Yoke of *Popish Tyranny*; we may be under the Yoke of the Devil notwithstanding. We do not bow down to Idols, and worship graven Images; but do not we worship the Men of the World, and the Things of the World? Are not Silver and Gold our Idols? Covetousness (the Apostle tells us) is *Idolatry*. We must not think all Religion lies in coming to Church, and hearing Sermons, and joining with this or the other Party, in extolling, or decrying a Ceremony, or in putting

ting on an outward Reverence in the Worship of GOD, tho' too many there are who hardly arrive so far as that. But let us consider what Effect all this has wrought upon our Minds, what Alteration it has made in our Tempers and Dispositions. *The Wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy.* St. James iii. 17. and the Apostle gives us the bright and lovely Character of a true Christian, and tells us, Gal. v. 22, 23. *That the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance.*

We may live amongst good Men now, and yet be separated from them in the great Day. We may have the Name of GOD and CHRIST in our Mouths, and the Temper of the Devil in our Hearts. We may attend on serious Sermons and solemn Sacraments, and be but the more prophane after all: Yea, if Christ himself in Person were to preach his own Gospel to us, and we had the Honour and Happiness to hear Sermons from his own Mouth: If we were Workers of Iniquity, tho' we had the Power of working Wonders in his Name, and casting out Devils from the Bodies of Men, yet we should be curs'd from his Presence, and
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cast into Hell both Body and Soul with the Devils, at the great and terrible Judgment. This is not the supercilious *Cant* of severe, morose, precise, and unfociable Men; but the Word of the Holy *Jesus*, who (though now kind, and patient) will at last be the dreadful Judge to those who have sinned without any Restraint for that very Reason, and have abounded in Wickedness, because he hath abounded in Grace and Compassion.

Think it therefore no jesting Matter, but a Thing of the utmost Importance, when I desire you to consider the Condition of your own Souls, and examine your selves by such Rules as these. Do you obey the Laws of GOD in your Thoughts, or do you secretly wish that you were at Liberty to break them, and in your Hearts conclude them unreasonable? If in deliberate habitual Thought you can delight in being unjust, revengeful, voluptuous, and debauch'd; all your fair Appearances, all your good Words, all your external Conformity to the Law of GOD is but vile Hypocrisy, a Thing which GOD abhors. Do you imagine that GOD, who knows every Thought of our Hearts, will ever accept of us, only because we deceive the Eyes of Men, (and not that neither perhaps) or that he will have good Thoughts of the Devil, because he can transform

transform himself into an Angel of Light? Consider also whether You are Religious when You have the strongest Temptations to the contrary. 'Tis no great Vertue to appear just, temperate, chaste, sober and meek, when you have no Opportunities to be cruel and oppressive, no Temptations to Intemperance and Licentiousness, or to Malice and Revenge. But when You are tempted by Interest and Inclination; when You are provoked to Sin, and may be *private in Sin*; when your Baseness and Treachery, your Partiality and Injustice, your Malice and Cruelty, your Covetousness or Debauchery, your Censoriousness and Hypocrisie, or any other Vices, may be conceal'd from or applauded by Men; yet then can You say with an Holy Trembling and Devout Abhorrence, *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* Consider also, whether your Practice of Religion be universal. You can pretend Conscience perhaps in little Things; but do You practise it in the great Things of Religion? You profess, it may be, to have a great Deal of Devotion and Love to GOD: But where is your Justice and Charity to Men? Or does not your Justice and *common* Honesty to Men (if I may now-a-days give it such an Epithet) sufficiently, as You fancy, excuse You from Devotion toward GOD? How many deceive them-

F selves

selves this Way? As there are too many on the other hand, who would pass for Men of *uncommon Holiness*, who upon a very slender Temptation hardly appear to be Men of *common Honesty*! You can forbear perhaps some scandalous Vices in sober People's Company, for Fear of offending them: But do You not joyn with others in their Wickedness, for Fear of offending them too, not considering that We must keep a *Conscience void of Offence towards God as well as towards Men*? Acts xxiv. 16.

Another Method, whereby we ought to examine our selves, is to represent to our Minds the awful Scenes of Death and Judgment. Let Us imagine our selves just breathing our Last, taking an Eternal Farewel of this World, and going into the World of Spirits; all Things here appearing but idle Dreams, and empty Delusions, Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. Let Us then consider, What should We think of our selves in such an Hour? What Judgment should We then make of the Course of Life We are now engag'd in? Those Excuses, which We now make from the Love We have to Earthly Vanities, and our Fondness for our Lusts and Passions, would then appear most unreasonable and foolish. Think your selves therefore standing before the Judgment-Seat of *Christ*, and just going to hear the last Sentence

tence pronounced upon You, (which will shortly be the Case) and with that awful Representation take a solemn Review of your past Life, and your present State; and then make a Judgment, and pass Sentence upon yourselves; and whatever You seem or pretend to be, remember, the Judgment of GOD will be according to *Truth*.

(2.) We should manifest our Thankfulness for our own Deliverance by our pitying, and praying for those who are yet under the Power of these unreasonable Men. They are deny'd the Liberties of Men, and the Privileges of Christians, and must either part with all the Comforts of this Life, or lose the Satisfaction and Peace of a good Conscience, which is infinitely worse: For 'tis better to be expos'd to the Rage of Man, than the Wrath of GOD. But certainly We do not consider and value our own happy Circumstances, and the Gospel We enjoy, if We have no Concern for our Brethren, who are under the Hands of their barbarous Persecutors. If, while our Houses and Temples stand secure, We have no Sense of the Miseries of our Fellow-Servants in those Countries, where their own Habitations are turn'd into Heaps of Ruin, and their Enemies have either shut up, or *burnt up all the Synagogues of God in the Land*. If while We enjoy Health and Ease, Liberty and

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Plenty,

Plenty, Friends and Relations, We feel no Compassion for those poor Creatures who pine away in Famine and Captivity, and groan under cruel Torments, their dearest Friends driven from them, and scatter'd into foreign Countries. If when We can assemble to worship GOD in Tranquility and Joy, We have no Concern for the Servants of *Christ*, who are neither allow'd the Peace of their own Houses, nor the Privileges of the House of GOD, but are depriv'd of the Refreshments of Life, and of the *Refuge of Death*: If We are unconcern'd at all this, We are unthankful under our own Mercies and Deliverances. The Prophet gives Us a Description of the profane Stupidity of some in his Days, *Amos vi. 3, 4, 5, 6.* *Woe to them that are at Ease in Zion, that put far away the evil Day, and cause the Seat of Violence to come near; that lie upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the Stall; that chant to the Sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves Instruments of Musick like David; that drink Wine in Bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief Ointments: But they are not grieved for the Affliction of Joseph.* While We enjoy our Ease and Pleasure, the Afflictions of our Brethren may give Us this Thought, How should We be-

behave our selves, if We were in their Case ? Is it likely that We should suffer any great Trouble and Adversity for the Cause of GOD, when We can hardly bring our selves to serve Him a little in our Ease and Prosperity ? Could We chearfully sacrifice all that We have in the World for GOD and Christ, when perhaps by our brutish Debaucheries We sacrifice every Day to the Devil ? Could We *take joyfully the Spoiling of our Goods*, and be reduc'd to Poverty and Want for the Testimony of *Jesus*, when We murmur to part with a little for the Service of GOD, or to succour our Fellow-Christians in Distress, and in both these Cases have more Regard to the Law of Man, than GOD ? When We are asham'd, or afraid to own, and assert, and practise Religion before our Friends and Neighbours ; is it probable that We should have the Courage to own it before our barbarous and bloody Enemies ? If We can endure a thousand Inconveniences and Dangers for this World, *while We can hardly venture through a few Drops of Rain* to come to the House of GOD, or *laugh or sleep* away the Sermon when We are there ; Can We think, such a lukewarm or profane Spirit would carry us through the Terrors of Death, and the Flames of Martyrdom ? And yet, tho' We give our Bodies to be burnt, and have not Charity, We are
Nothing.

Nothing. Such Thoughts as these are not improper in a Time of the greatest Peace and Security: For they, who now endure such terrible Hardships might once perhaps think themselves as secure as We: And tho' We are never call'd to the Sufferings of the Martyrs, yet We ought to have the Spirit of the Martyrs in Us, a supreme Love to GOD, and ardent Zeal for his Glory; a stedfast Faith in Christ, and a fervent Charity to all his Servants; a Contempt of the Frowns and Flatteries of this World, and a believing Prospect of another, and a Readiness to sacrifice our Lives for Him, who shed his most precious Blood for Us; without which Spirit and Temper We can never be the faithful Servants of GOD here, nor receive the Reward of such hereafter.

(3.) We should express our Thankfulness to GOD, by our endeavouring to teach the Principles of the Christian and the Protestant Religion to our Children, and to breed them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. We should lay before them the Reasons of the Christian Religion, and shew them the Absurdity and Danger of those Doctrines and Superstitions We are deliver'd from; and convince them, that *Protestantism*, is no new invented Religion, but the old Primitive Christianity rescued from Innovations and vile Corruptions, which had
been

been mingled with it, and are of such a Nature, as tend utterly to ruin the great Design of it. We should infuse into our Children a great and religious Value for our Sacred and Civil Liberties and Privileges, and teach them the vast Difference between Liberty, and Disorder, and Licentiousness. By this Means We shall do our Part at least, that instead of the Ignorance and Uncharitableness, the Prophaneness and Debauchery, which is the Scandal of the present Age, Knowledge and Piety, Love and Charity, may flourish in the rising Generation. One Instance of Thankfulness and Obedience the *Israelites* were to perform to the Great and Gracious GOD, who had deliver'd them from *Egyptian* Bondage, and remov'd their Shoulders from the Burthen, and their Hands from the Pots; was, That they should teach their Children the Law of GOD. *Deut. xi. 18, 19. Therefore shall Ye lay up these my Words in your Heart and in your Soul, &c. and Ye shall teach them your Children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the Way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* If therefore We did more diligently lay up the Word of GOD in our own Hearts and Souls as an inestimable Treasure, We should be more capable and more ready to instil useful Knowledge into our Children. Remember
this

this then, that first it must be laid up in our own Hearts and Souls.

(4.) Another Instance of that thankful Sense of our Deliverance which we ought to have, is, that We keep our selves at a great Distance from the same Spirit. You will be ready to think, (it's possible) *to what Purpose is all this Waste?* Are We not all Protestants, and by Consequence do hate Persecution? What Need then is there of saying any Thing against that which every Body abhors? But upon second Thoughts We shall see Reason to guard against the very same Sort of Temper. We all indeed abhor Persecution when We our selves are persecuted, and therefore We should as much hate to persecute Others. But there is the same *Fund of Corruption* in our Natures, as in theirs who persecute: And We find among all Parties, this Spirit is not quite driven out, tho' at all Times it has not Opportunity to rage, nor Power to destroy. We may persecute others with our Hands, with our Tongues, and in our Hearts. Tho' We cannot kindle Fires on Earth with our Hands, yet our Tongues may be *set on Fire of Hell*: Or if no Mortal can charge Us with the least uncharitable Expression, yet if We hate our Brother in our Heart, We know what the great GOD hath pronounc'd, 1 St. John iii. 15. *He that hateth his Brother*

is a Murderer. We must not think that Ignorance will totally excuse us in this Case: For a persecuting Spirit always proceeds from some *vile Lust*, and sinful Passion. And tho' *St. Paul* tells us, that when he persecuted the Christians, he *did it ignorantly*, and not out of Malice, against the Conviction of his own Mind and Conscience, and therefore he obtain'd Mercy; yet we, who solemnly profess to believe in *Christ*, and receive his Gospel as our Rule, in which are the plainest Precepts, and the most powerful Motives to Love and Charity, even towards those who scruple that which we think lawful, or think that lawful which we scruple; I say We, who profess to own and practise these blessed Rules, cannot possibly plead Ignorance, unless 'tis wilful Ignorance; which is so far from being an Excuse, that it is in its self a great Crime.

If then we would fly this Spirit, let us avoid those Things which are as the Sparks by which this infernal Fire is kindled, as Pride, Revenge, implicit Faith, and an immoderate Love of the World. *Pride* and *Self-Conceit* hinders Men from Knowledge, and keeps them from Charity; for they think they have Knowledge enough already, and more perhaps than all others; and for that Reason they are impatient of Contradiction,

diction, and enrag'd against all who will not submit to their Sentiments. *Revenge* is another Source of Persecution; for when one Party has us'd their Brethren a little roughly, they (when it comes to their Turn to be uppermost) are tempted to retaliate: Which is contrary to the Spirit of the Gospel, and the way to make Persecution last as long as the World. *Implicit Faith* is another Ground of Persecution; for they who take up a Religion upon Trust, and never examine any Thing themselves, are not willing that others should: And they are miserably subject to be impos'd on by those who have the absolute Command of their Faith, and who make it their Business, with all their Might, by all the Arts of Baseness, to misrepresent the Opinions and Actions of those who differ from them. Thus the Apostles were represented as *Movers of Sedition*, and Men that turn'd the World upside down, tho' their Principles and their Practices were directly contrary; for their Doctrine enjoin'd all due Reverence and Obedience to Magistrates, and tended more than any other Religion, to the Peace, Order, and Happiness of the World. *Immoderate Love of the World*, and insatiable Covetousness is another Spring of Persecution. The *Love of Money is the Root of all Evil*; and of this among the rest, which is
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one of the most unreasonable and inhuman Evils. Covetous Men, the Sons of Rapine and Violence, have in all Ages been some of the most zealous Persecutors, being glad to set their Neighbours Houses in a Flame, that (like many base People on such Occasions) they may snatch something for themselves in the Hurry. They spoil People of their Goods, upon the very same Principles that Thieves rob on the Highway; only they can do it with Safety and Applause, when they plunder under *the Banner of the Church*. The Dragoons of *France* are execrable Instances of all manner of Rapine and Cruelty, under Pretence of suppressing a false Religion, and converting Men to the true; and nothing on this side Hell could exceed their Rage and Devilism, but the Malice and *Ingratitude* of those who set them on Work, and the *Impudence* of those who deny it.

Let us therefore pray, That GOD would preserve us all from the dismal Consequences, and the more dismal Guilt of Persecution. Let us not be too confident of our own Spirits. When the Prophet told *Hazael* what a Monster of Cruelty he should prove, *Is thy Servant a Dog?* said he. GOD only, who knows our Thoughts afar off, can infallibly tell what we should be, and how we should act, had we Power and

Provocation. *Elisba told Hazael, the Lord had shew'd him he should be King over Syria,* 2 Kings viii. 13. intimating, that he knew not what he should be when he came to have Sovereign Power. It would indeed be a sort of Persecution to expose our Brethren, who dwell quietly among us, by a malicious prophesying what unmerciful Tyrants they would be, if once they were on the rising Ground; which is Usurping the Province of the Heart-searching GOD, and a great Injury to our Neighbour. But tho' we must not censure others, yet we ought to suspect our selves, and check even the first Beginnings of Uncharitableness in our own Hearts, following the blessed Advice of the Apostle, *Eph. iv. 31, 32. Let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking be put away from you, with all Malice: And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as GOD for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

(5.) Lastly, Let Us express our Thankfulness to GOD, by being Thankful and Dutiful to those who are, under GOD, the Authors of our Deliverance, from those unreasonable Men, who when they kill us, think they do GOD Service; who not only curse us as *Hereticks*, and out of the Pale of

of the Church, but would send us out of the World.

This Day gives Us a double Occasion for Thanksgiving. On this Day, above an Hundred Years ago, a kind and watchful Providence deliver'd us from that horrible Snare of the *Powder-Treason*: And on this Day a *Protestant Prince* landed, to save Us from the Chains that were preparing for Us. He ventured All to rescue us. It pleas'd GOD to bless his generous and seasonable Attempt. The Addition he made to his own personal Honour and Greatness, was very inconsiderable, compared with the Labour and Fatigues he endured. He wore a Crown it's true; but how many Thorns are there under all earthly Crowns! And how uneasie was *His* made to Him by the Vexation, the Disappointment, and the Ingratitude He met with! I cannot (even yet) * think it unseasonable to mention his Memory with Honor: And they who hate and blacken his Reign,

* The Liturgy of the Church of *England*, in the Prayers for the 5th of Nov. has these Words; " Almighty God and heavenly Father, who of thy gracious Providence, &c. didst likewise upon this Day wonderfully conduct thy Servant our late King, and bring him safely into this Kingdom, to preserve us from the late Attempts of our Enemies to bereave us of our Religion and Laws, &c.

ought well to explain themselves, if they pretend to love the present: For had that Prince never been our King, We see no human Prospect, that Her present Majesty would ever have been our Queen. Both their Thrones stand upon the same Foundation. The Israelites were not praised for forgetting their Deliverer. *Judg. viii. 34, 35.* The Children of Israel remembred not the Lord their GOD, who had delivered them out of the Hands of all their Enemies on every side: Neither shewed they Kindness to the House of Jerubbaal, namely Gideon, according to all the Goodness which he had shewed unto Israel. When People forget their GOD, no Wonder they forget the Instruments of his Providence. It can be no Affront, certainly, to so Great and so Good a QUEEN as ours, to mention her Predecessor with Respect, and not to deny his Memory that Character with which Her Majesty has honoured it from the Throne upon several Occasions.

—Let Us then be thankful and dutiful, to the happy Government we live under, not entertaining unjust and ungrateful Suspicions of our Superiors, nor hearkning to every dishonourable Story, which the Sons of Slander impudently publish against a Government, which their suffering no other Punishment

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Punishment than the Reproaches of their own Conscience, and the Abhorrence of all good Men, proves to be a *mercifull* one indeed. *Let us fear GOD and the Queen, and not meddle with them that are given to Change.* Let us chearfully bear our Part of the present necessary Expences, to support the Common Cause, against the common Enemy. Let us offer up our frequent and fervent Prayers to Almighty GOD for his continual Blessing upon our Gracious Sovereign, who has sufficiently declared against a Spirit of Persecution. Let us pray, That GOD would blefs all the glorious Victories She has obtained (in a just and necessary War) with an honourable and lasting Peace ; that we may live in the Love of GOD, in Loyalty to the *Queen*, and in Peace and Charity one with another ; that We may be as happy a People, as *Her Majesty* wishes Us to be : That She may have a long and happy Reign over Us, and our Children may grow Old under her Wise and Prosperous Government ; and that when GOD shall afflict these Kingdoms by Calling Her out of this World, She may go to possess an Eternal Kingdom, and wear an Immortal Crown : And that in the mean Time We may under Her, live peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty, practising

practising that Religion We profess, the Religion of the Prince of Peace, the meek and holy Jesus;

To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, Dominion and Praises, for ever: Amen.

THE END.